

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Admiral -

A thoughtful + interesting proposal
by an Agency professional. Worthy
of your time.

R.G.

Bob - Ask [redacted] to attach
our paperwork in this area - &
then along w/ Bob + Jack develop
a concept of how to proceed

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27 March 1980

Mr. Director:

Pursuant to your long standing request for submission of new ideas or courses of action directly to you, the following concept is presented. From the outset I want to acknowledge that the ideas presented herein are not wholly my own. In fact, the major contribution to this thought process was made by the former Deputy Director of Research & Development, [redacted] who really formulated the majority of the underlying philosophical points subsumed in this communication. [redacted] untimely death last year engendered a major gap in the evolution of this idea, but I believe that I am now in a position to submit it to you for consideration, in a form which would not do major violence to [redacted] underlying philosophy.

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I believe that the time has come for the Intelligence Community (not solely the CIA) to consider the formation of an Intelligence University analogous to the National War College. It seems clear to me now and it was long clear to [redacted] that the process of intelligence from collection through communication to policy makers of the US Government is an area ripe for study with the highest levels of academic rigor. The Intelligence University could serve as a center of study and learning for professional intelligence officers and concurrently as a center of developmental training for junior intelligence officers. To the best of my knowledge, the process of intelligence is not a major area of study at many universities. There is no Reserve Intelligence Officer Training Corps. (analogous to the military ROTC) extant on campuses in the US. In this light, the formation of an Intelligence University would begin to rectify a situation wherein the intelligence process is an area worthy of study, but there do not exist mechanisms to effect such study. Some of the areas for study are included in an Appendix to this paper.

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I believe that there are some major benefits to be derived from the establishment of such an Intelligence University at this time. From an internalized point of view, the exposure of top notch professional intelligence officers in the Community to a challenging curriculum in the process of intelligence would almost assuredly stimulate these individuals to higher levels of performance. For more junior intelligence officers, the Intelligence University could supplement our extant Training Courses and the "on-the-job-training" which now forms the basis for the development of our intelligence officer cadre. From an externalized point of view, the Intelligence University could draw heavily on highly regarded academic and private sector experts in many areas thereby fostering in the minds of these invited lecturers an appreciation of the level of

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professionalism and competence resident in the Intelligence Community. Also, in an external sense the presence of some students from other Departments of the Government and the private sector could help to forge more productive relationships between the Intelligence Community and other domestic organizations (much the same as is effected by the Industrial College of the Armed Forces).

Naturally, there are costs associated with the implementation of this idea. There will be facility costs, labor costs for the faculty and administration of such a University, honoraria for private sector instructors, and "lost" productive work time for some of the most capable people within the Intelligence Community. These costs will not be cheap and must be thoroughly weighed against anticipated benefits. However, I believe that, on balance, the costs would prove to be a worthwhile investment. Therefore, I suggest to you that there should be undertaken a thorough study of this area at very senior levels within the Intelligence Community.

I readily acknowledge that I have only scratched the surface of the problem in this communication and that the managerial and administrative issues raised by this suggestion require extensive study at management levels far more senior than mine. However, I believe that this idea may be one who's "time has come" and I believe that it is in consonance with your basic philosophy of augmenting the level of rigor and accountability of training for people in the Intelligence Community.

Chief, Advanced Concepts Division
Office of Research & Development

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APPENDIX

The Epistemology of Intelligence - When the Intelligence Community provides reporting on specific events, there is often a level of uncertainty in the conclusions even though the event may be very finite in time and space (consider the 22 September 1979 flash in the atmosphere off the coast of South Africa). It would seem that there are important philosophical questions that need be brought to bear on such reporting, addressing the question, e.g., "How does one know what one purports to know in such reporting?" In the area of estimative or predictive intelligence epistemological considerations are even greater because there are certain areas of intelligence interest which are not only unknown but, for the most part, are unknowable. While I feel hardly qualified to instruct students in a course of this nature, I am sure that a suitable course could be developed.

Surrogate Information Concepts - Often in the process of intelligence, the single piece of information desired or needed to complete a rigorous analysis is unavailable; and in such cases, analysts must rely on inference or on surrogate data. In the case where inference is used, we find ourselves right back in the area of epistemology. In the cases where surrogate data is used, there are subtle implications contained in the analysis process and, indeed, a need for thorough understanding on the part of collectors regarding the use and need for such surrogate data. The understanding on the part of collectors is important here because it is a rare situation where there is a unique set of surrogate data which will satisfy the analysis process in the absence of the critical data. That being the case, the collectors must truly understand the analytical problem in its entirety because collectors may then be able to provide a separate set of surrogate data which is perfectly acceptable to the analyst, but which may be more collectable than the set suggested by the analyst. Awareness of this problem area and effective communication of these types of problems among Intelligence Community professionals could well lead to more cogent and focused collection and information processing capabilities or activities in support of analytical problem areas.

The Ethics of Intelligence - Clearly there are ethical questions that can be raised about intelligence activities at many levels. The decade of the 70's saw many of these raised in the public media regarding the administration of hallucinogenic drugs to individuals and the contemplation of assassination plots. I doubt that these areas require a serious revisitation, but I believe there are more subtle questions which could be fruitful areas for study. For example, let us suppose that an analyst with a solid foundation in geophysics were to predict that a major earthquake (magnitude 10 on the Richter scale) was going to

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occur in an area of the world (say India) in the Summer of 1981. While such a prediction seems rather harmless on the surface, it appears to me that it raises serious policy-related questions for the US Government. Without boring you with an analysis of a "truth table" for such a prediction, I think it is rather clear that any communication or non-communication of this prediction or any action or non-action by the US Government related to this prediction would have to coincide identically with the occurrence or non-occurrence of the predicted earthquake. The problems that could arise from a communication of an erroneous prediction or inaction in the face of a correct prediction could be disastrous. Additional problems arise in this example from the prediction of a time for such a disaster. The above is obviously a contrived example, but I believe that it represents an area where serious scholarly study could be brought to bear on the process of intelligence.

The Useful Communication of Intelligence Conclusions - Thorough and cogent intelligence analysis, ineffectively communicated to the responsible policy makers of the US Government is no better than absence of such analysis. Faulty and erroneous intelligence analysis convincingly presented to policy makers of the US Government and leading to action is clearly worse than the absence of such analysis. Each responsible policy maker of the Government will receive and assimilate information in a very personalized manner; yet, there are probably fundamental principles of communication which may be understood which could lead to a thorough understanding on the part of the policy maker of the salient features of analysis, the set of rational alternate hypotheses that have been or need be considered, the alternative conclusions that may be drawn, and the critical data and inference that leads to the exposition of the proffered conclusion. This area of study could indeed lead to some very fundamental and scholarly investigation of the human cognitive process.

The above four areas of suggested study certainly do not encompass the universe of study that could be undertaken by an Intelligence University. These are merely exemplars of some areas that could be fruitful pursuits by such an institution. I believe that they provide at the very least a requirement for further consideration of a total curriculum for an Intelligence University.

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